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DEPARTMENT FOR NEA/ELA, AF/E, PM/PPA FOR GLANCY, PM/PPA FOR
HOPKINS

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TAGS: [MOPS](#) [PBTS](#) [PHSA](#) [PTER](#) [KCRM](#) [EWWT](#) [EG](#)
SUBJECT: EGYPT SUPPORTIVE OF UNSC RESOLUTION AND CONTACT
GROUP

REF: STATE 129941

Classified By: Minister Counselor for Economic and Political Affairs
William R. Stewart for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

¶1. (C) Polmincouns on December 15 delivered demarche to Egyptian MFA Ambassador Abdelhameed Marzouk on the UNSC resolution and formation of a contact group (CG) to address piracy in the Horn of Africa (reftel). Marzouk already was aware of the resolution and the CG idea because he led the Egyptian delegation at the International Conference on Piracy around Somalia in Nairobi on December 10-11, where he spoke with PM A/S Kimmitt. He stated that Egypt will likely join the CG as it would be "useful" and "it makes sense for us to join."

¶2. (C) Marzouk shared with us a communiqu that states that China, Russia, South Africa, Namibia, and Burkina Faso currently have reservations about the portions of the resolution dealing with land operations in Somalia and air space control. However, he opined that the ability to pursue pirates ashore was critical to the success of any anti-piracy initiative. Marzouk told us that Egypt has concerns over the legality of prosecuting and incarcerating pirates, but said Egypt felt that the idea of trying pirates in an international court was an alternative. He said that individual sanctions, on pirate leaders, are a "good idea", but he wondered if they could be effectively implemented.

Egypt's View on the International Conference on Piracy

¶3. (S) Marzouk shared with us the draft communiqu from the International Conference on Piracy in Nairobi. He told us that the conference was positive, but he noted that the proposals were too general, and there was no agreement on a legal avenue. He said that the Government of Egypt's (GOE) condemns piracy and supports efforts--both on land and at sea--to combat piracy in the Gulf of Aden and the Indian Ocean. Marzouk declared that the Red Sea is still free of piracy and asserted that the littoral states can maintain its security. He said the GOE is concerned that there be an entity to "do the work on the ground" in Somalia. Marzouk asked if there was a group that could replace the Ethiopians such as a multi-national force, a UN force, or a Somali force. He said that Egypt does not like the Shibaab, but is open to dealing with all that have influence in the country. Marzouk also expressed reservations with the implementation of the "no ransom" policy. He said that while all countries may agree to this provision, it will only result in "payments under the table." As an example, Marzouk told us that the Saudis are currently negotiating to pay the ransom for the Sirius Star oil tanker, but that any payment to the pirates would be made by "Somali tribal leaders."

15. (C) Comment: Egypt appears to be a committed partner in the fight against piracy because its Suez Canal receipts are directly threatened. The GOE is anxious to engage with the United States in counter-piracy efforts. However, Egypt will be most active if actions against pirates are done under the auspices of the UN, or in conjunction with a multi-lateral effort.

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